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U. S. SPECIAL MISSION REVIEWS JAPANESE FISHERIES SITUATION

A special American fisheries mission invited by Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers to study the Japanese fisheries industry has completed its assignment and returned to the United States. The mission was composed of: Edward W. Allen of Seattle, United States Commissioner, International Fisheries Commission; Frederick M. Sundy of Gloucester, Massachusetts, and Donald P. Loker of Terminal Island, California, both of them executives of fishing and fish processing companies.

Prior to departure, the mission prepared and submitted the following report based on its study and observation of Japanese fisheries and fishing industry.

Preliminary

Because of the shortness of time allotted to the review, an explanation would appear to be desirable for the assertion that the members of the mission consider their opportunity to reach conclusions adequate, except where the contrary is expressed for the following reasons:

(1) All members of the mission have had long experience in fishery matters.

(2) All have had contact with the international aspects of fisheries.

(3) All have had more or less familiarity with the Japanese situation in general and had given it some study before departing for Japan.

(4) The members were promptly well briefed by the Natural Resources Section executives.

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(5) Intensive field work was provided which not only afforded observation of various actual fishery operations and inspection of boats, harbors, markets, processing and storage facilities, along a substantial portion of the Japanese coast, but also numerous discussions with fishermen, boat captains, fishery association officials, Military Government personnel, Japanese National Government Fisheries Agency officials and of course, representatives of the pertinent divisions of SCAP.

(6) The Schedule was arranged so as to afford a final period for the members to assemble and analyze their data.

Objectives

The members of the mission have carefully considered the objectives of SCAP to provide maximum immediate indigenous production and to promote a sound permanent Japanese economy. They appreciate the necessity for securing the greatest production consistent with continued maximum annual yield. They also recognize the necessity for SCAP to substitute a wholesome democratic attitude on the part of the Japanese populace for the historical feudal subservience. They are sympathetic toward these objectives and hope that their comments and suggestions may be of such assistance that the steps taken toward them will be reconciled with major allied nation opinion.

The Potsdam Proclamation permitted Japan "to maintain such industries as will sustain her economy ----------. To this end, access to as distinguished from control of, raw materials shall be permitted."

SCAP, we understand, has given this language the rational construction that it means, to permit the Japanese people to reinstate themselves in peaceful industrial activities, but that it does not mean to permit the Japanese to reinstate the ruthless disregard for the rights and interests of others which for many years characterized the conduct of the industrial and military despots, who seized arbitrary control over the economy of Japan.

There is probably no industry which impinges upon international relations so directly as does that of fisheries. A can of fish upon a grocer's shelf is little different commercially from a can of corn. But there is a vast difference between seven vessels flying seven different national flags, contending in the same ocean for the same fish, and that of two friendly Illinois farmers with their adjoining fields of growing corn. Fishery competition was responsible for war after war between the Dutch and British. We know of no war over growing corn.

In the attempt to restore Japanese ocean fisheries, therefore, not only international law but international ethics must be considered. Contempt shown by the Japanese toward other fishery nations contributed greatly toward the bitterness which still persists in many quarters. The endeavor of SCAP to alleviate this bitterness by directing the Japanese ocean fisheries to be conducted upon sound conservation lines and recognize the legitimate interests and rights of other nations should be helpful to both the Japanese and the Allied Powers.

It appears desirable, therefore, to present a brief review of world fishery conditions and trends before considering the Japanese fisheries specifically.

Estimates of world fishery production vary from thirty to forty billion pounds, consumed chiefly as wholesome protein food, rich in vitamin and other essential food elements. The Japanese are above the average in fish consumption, so that an adequate supply of fish, particularly in view of their other food shortages is of vital importance to them. Nevertheless Japan is only one of many fish consuming nations. With population rapidly increasing in other parts of the world as well as in Japan, with the limitations upon increased agricultural food production becoming daily more critical, the problem of the maximum utilization and rational distribution of fish is of accelerating importance to every nation. The consideration of Japanese fisheries, therefore, can not be isolated from the world fishery picture.

World Fishery Situation

Although fishermen have crossed the Atlantic to the Grand Banks for centuries, fisheries were largely local. And, though there were local fish shortages from time to time, there was no apprehension that the supply of fish could be exhausted.

With the advent of modern propulsion, processing and refrigeration, a wholly different condition prevailed. It became physically possible for any nation to possess vessels able to fish at any distance and return with an edible product. It became possible for the fishing vessels of one or several nations to concentrate upon certain ocean fisheries with such intensity as to exhaust them commercially and even to exterminate them.

Yet until the last few years the principles of law generally considered applicable to ocean fisheries were those developed in the light of fishery conditions as they existed three hundred years ago. A nation "owned" its territorial waters whether the width was recognized as three miles, four or any other distance; therefore, it owned the fish in them as long as they stayed in them. Anywhere else in the ocean anybody could fish without limit and in any manner he saw fit.

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Recent appreciation of the danger of such unrestricted fishing resulted in two movements, (1) for fishery conservation, (2) for reconsideration of rights and duties pertaining to ocean fisheries.

Since the fishing industry has been subjected to such a complete revolution within recent decades, wholly new legal and operational concepts are absolutely essential.

Fishery conservation is still in its infancy, but great progress has been made. Greatest of all is the conclusive recognition that certain fisheries can be exhausted or exterminated and that by proper management some depleted fisheries can be restored and maintained at a permanently high level of annual productivity. Many nations have successfully applied these principles to domestic fisheries. Canada and the United States have led in successfully applying joint international management to joint fisheries (halibut and salmon). International agreements have been applied, though without joint management, to whaling and fur seals, and rapid progress is being made in the negotiation of bilateral and multilateral conservation treaties. A subsidiary of the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization, is devoting much attention to fishery utilization and conservation.

A corollary to the recognition for the necessity of conservation is that fishery management in order to be successful must be based upon factual knowledge. There are local cases in which a certain degree of success is based upon generations of fishing experience. Japanese fishery associations supply notable examples. But generally, certainly as to migratory fish, accurate scientific research is a prerequisite to successful management.

It should be noted, however, that all scientific fishery research does not promote conservation. Such research may be directed wholly toward finding the most effective places and means to exploit fisheries or to locate new fisheries to exploit. This may have merit as to unutilized stocks but the Japanese Government was the most glaring example of its misuse, encouraging maximum exploitation with no thought for the maintenance of a future supply.

World War I stimulated interest in ocean fisheries as a source for needed food elements. The Portuguese have long contended that the "three mile rule" (that a nation owns the strip of water three miles wide off its coast, no more no less, and that its fishery control is limited to that strip) was unsound. But it was the Japanese invasion of the highly concentrated, valuable and easily depleted red salmon fishery of Bristol Bay, Alaska, in the 1930's, which precipitated international reaction. The United States Government had gone to great expense in research on this fishery. It had impose rigorous control over its fishermen and operators in the attempt to maintain a permanent maximum annual yield. Japanese floating canneries operating with floating gill nets

two miles or more in length were effectively cutting off the stream of salmon headed for the Bristol Bay rivers to spawn. Although the vessels operated ten, twenty or more miles offshore, the interception of these fish was such that it threatened the extermination of the stock.

The United States made strong representations to Japan asserting special interest in these fish which were spawned inland, remained there part of their lives, went to sea for a period, then returned to their parent streams to spawn and die. Without waiving its contentions based upon the antiquated concepts of international law, Japan agreed for the time being to discontinue this fishery practice. Although this episode related to a single and remote fishery it is believed to mark the beginning of a new epoch in concepts of ocean fishery rights and limitations.

United States fishermen generally were aroused. Pressure upon their government, stimulated by the Japanese participation in World War II, elicited the so-called Truman Proclamation of September 28, 1945, which officially asserted a special interest by a nation in its coastal fisheries regardless of whether they extended beyond territorial waters, and also its right to protect them. Although the accompanying press release disclosed that Alaska salmon were definitely in mind, the proclamation showed full appreciation of the tuna and other fisheries in which our fishermen operated off the shores of other nations. The whole program was based upon the ethical concept of reciprocal rights and the United States as a coastal nation was proposing nothing which it was unwilling to grant to other coastal nations under similar conditions.

Mexico, Argentina, Peru and other nations were stirred into action, some of it sound, some of it questionable. This review shows that the old idea that any nation has the right to deplete or destroy the coastal fisheries of another nation, simply by keeping its operations three miles off-shore, is now obsolete. It is imperative that this be borne in mind in the consideration of present and future Japanese fishing.

Japanese Fisheries

The importance of fisheries as an industry, and fish as a food, in Japan, is unchallenged. It is estimated that more than a million people engage in fishing, that there are more than 400,000 fishing boats of all types and that the present annual production exceeds six billion pounds.

Contrary to popular impression, the Japanese coastal fishery produces far more fish than the deep sea fishery and gives employment to the great majority of the fishermen. When it comes to food supply, it is essential to appreciate the importance of these individual small operations. In our opinion SCAP has done this and, with comprehensive assistance in providing gear and petroleum, has made a real contribution to the food supply of Japan and has relieved the American taxpayer.

The subject of fishery rights is almost too complicated even for experts to explain, but it is sufficient to say that different groups or communities fish certain definite areas and are exceedingly jealous of their rights. There are said to be some 3,000 fishery associations. These are mostly on a community basis although the Japanese military, when in control, forced them into prefectural organizations and then again into a national organization for purposes of more effectual regimentation. Under a new law these associations are being changed into so-called cooperatives which it is anticipated will reach 6,000 in number. An important feature is that in these groups, each fisherman retains his individuality. They are cooperative in a very practical sense, and inherently democratic.

With a few notable exceptions, such fishery conservation as has existed in Japan has been confined to these local associations which have placed practical limitations, seasonal and quantitative, upon their own membership in order to perpetuate the strictly local fishing rights.

It was in the field of deep sea fisheries, however, that the Japanese aroused international antagonisms by their ruthless methods of exploitation and contempt for the rights and interests of others. This antagonism continues to exist. The mission hopes this fact will be driven home to Japanese Government officials and to all fishermen and fish company executives. Those few officials who appear to recognize the situation deserve credit and encouragement, but numerous interviews disclosed either ignorance of the situation or a deceptive attempt to ignore it on the part of many Japanese who were intelligent enough to know better. Until the Japanese fishing industry faces these cold facts, it can expect little sympathy from the public of other nations.

In this connection it is pertinent to discuss the Japanese petitions for extension of the "MacArthur Line." The mission does not feel it has sufficient information to chart biologically sound Pacific Ocean fishery boundary lines. It has the impression that, if these were the only considerations, there might be historical and biological merit in Japan's request for extension of the westerly boundary line, particularly in the China Sea. But when such requests are current with contemptuous disregard of the line as now fixed, the mission feels that the position of SCAP in demanding that current requests be given no consideration before further concessions are made, is absolutely correct.

Immediately after the war there was such pressure to increase the food supply that the trawling fleet in the Shimonoseki-Nagasaki area was rebuilt rapidly, and to a level beyond that necessary to fish the authorized areas. This overconstruction was unwisely approved by SCAP and the cost financed largely through Japanese Government loans. In the light of later developments the overbuilding became clear but proposals to reduce the fleet to rational proportions appear to be making slight progress. The associations' proposal that it "may" reduce by 20% fails to indicate any genuine

effort to meet the situation. In the event the Japanese Government does not take effective action SCAP might meet the situation to some extent by control over oil and other supplies. The Japanese Government might supplement the effectiveness of patrols by legislation limiting the number of boats or the pounds of the catch. The legal price of fish might also be reduced, so less efficient operators will be gradually eliminated.

Real aggressive biological investigations in the Pacific are now under way. Foremost is the United States, Fish and Wildlife Service program under the Farrington Bill. Headquarters are being established at Honolulu; three research ships are being put into operation; a staff is being organized, headed by competent fishery scientists. An investigation is already collecting information in Japan. The California tuna industry is cooperating with the State government in the study of albacore off the California coast and has pledged industry funds for research on tuna. The Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission, under a state compact between Washington, Oregon, and California voted to give albacore its first attention. Canada is undertaking similar work off the British Columbia coast and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service has been conducting tuna investigations around the Philippine Islands. It is essential that Japanese investigations be coordinated with the research work being done by these other countries.

With such research concentration it is reasonable to expect that progress will be forthcoming. It seems unsound to expand Japanese tuna fishery areas at this time with one possible exception of part of the albacore grounds northwest of Midway. The Japanese were fishing in this area prior to the war and it is not being fully utilized at present.

It is hardly conceivable that anyone would seriously consider allowing the Japanese again to invade the Alaska salmon or halibut fisheries. The United States Government committed itself as to its right to protect the salmon in no uncertain terms when the issue arose in the 1930's. It surely will not be inclined to recede from its position when the conservation of its coastal fisheries has acquired such increased importance.

It is safe to say that if the Japanese were to be allowed to enter the tuna, sardine, halibut and salmon coastal fisheries of the United States and other American countries, not only the fishermen, but the people of the entire coast, would rise in violent protest. It should be recognized by the Japanese fishermen and government that the people of the Pacific Coast are alive to this danger and are watching it with the keenest interest. Generally they bear no ill will toward the Japanese as a people but they are not likely to tolerate having Japanese fishing vessels again invade America's coastal fisheries.

Canada and the United States are not the only nations concerned; New Zealand and Australia have strong feelings; the Filipinos,

Chinese, and Koreans also must be considered. It may be said that these latter three countries are not making full utilization of their own coastal fisheries. This may be true, but possibly the excessiveness of Japanese fishing is responsible for the indigenous fishermen not having developed their own fisheries.

In discussions relating to the Japanese Governmental fishery administration it was found that the central government fisheries branch has been raised from a Bureau to an Agency in the Department of Agriculture and Forestry. In view of the importance of fisheries to Japan it is surprising that there is not a Ministry of Fisheries. Cabinet status would be most helpful in handling international problems.

The mission has been very favorably impressed with those members of the Fisheries Agency with whom it has had close contact, but has also been impressed by the apparent limitations upon the Agency jurisdiction. As a Ministry this group would be far more effective in coordinating the fisheries effort both National and Prefectural.

It was suggested in connection with the Shimonoseki-Nagasaki trawling fleets that a system of self-control be instituted. The mission has had sufficient experience to be exceedingly skeptical of the results. One of the most conservative and intelligent groups of fishermen in the world includes the halibut fishermen of Alaska, British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest, but an attempted self-control system carefully devised and with labor union backing, broke down completely. The mission feels that if a fishery is to be regulated it must be government patrolled and that it would improve the international position of the Japanese industry if the government could demonstrate effective control.

These observations lead to the question of fishery research in Japan. Effective biological research for the purposes of sound fishery regulation or management appears to have been, and still is, almost totally lacking despite the fact that there is no other nation which has operated as many fishery research vessels and research stations or has spent as much money thereon. Several factors contribute to this condition. Foremost is the fact that heretofore the deliberate objective of research was exploitation and more exploitation with seldom a thought for conservation. It should be noted, however, that one of the old fishery companies has been genuinely interested in fishery conservation research for several years and that there is a growing class of scientists and officials who seek to divert Japanese research along sound lines. These groups deserve encouragement.

Few among the scientists understand a sound approach to the problems. They pursue a blunderbuss type of research, gathering huge quantities of figures of varying degrees of importance or unimportance with no definite goals and no effective coordination of the data collected. Those who do comprehend modern functions, methods, and objectives of research are a small minority and are lacking in influence.

There seems to be some feeling on the part of Japanese scientists that it is beneath their dignity and station to "get into the muck." Sound conclusions require accurate basic data. Experience has shown that relying upon fishermen to furnish it is unsatisfactory regardless of how cooperative the fishermen may wish to be. The original data must be gathered by the scientists themselves with scientific accuracy, if results are to be dependable.

Another phase of the Japanese fishery situation from an international viewpoint is market competition, that is, competition in the field of selling fish and fishery products as distinguished from competition in the field of catching fish. There has been much apprehension on the part of United States canners, particularly of tuna and crab, that the Japanese with their cheap labor would be able to undersell them in the American market, in spite of the protective tariff. This is a point about which American capital and labor are most concerned.

There can be little question but that standards of living in Japan are far lower than in the United States, or that wages in Japan are very much smaller. Wages were quoted to the mission which were equivalent to less than 50¢ a day. Apparently there are miscellaneous adjustments, special allowances, bonuses, etc. which bring the actual compensation somewhat higher. Efficiency is low, and the per man, per diem production is small.

Prewar it was not uncommon for Japanese products, including seafood, to be subsidized or "dumped" on the export market solely to produce foreign exchange. We are confident that this will not be tolerated by SCAP. In the same manner we feel this must be prevented in the future. A paternalistic system of spreading employment which is an equivalent of "feather bedding" seems to prevail. Like all artificial forms of curtailing efficiency in production, the net results are expensive and lead to a lower standard of living.

Japanese fishery people apparently hope that with a peace treaty, all fishery limitations will be off. This does not follow. When Japan made her two peace treaties with Russia she exacted very definite and substantial fishery concessions. It is not expected that the United States will take an equally selfish position, but it would seem to be misplaced charity not to require in the peace treaty or in treaties that are concurrent and not subsequent that Japan bind itself permanently to sound fishery policies in the deep sea or international field. It is noteworthy that although the fishery interests expect to be turned loose upon the world without restriction by the peace treaty, the members of the Diet with whom the mission discussed the matter, appeared to take it for granted that the treaty would incorporate restrictions.

Just what these policies should be is a matter for careful consideration by the United States fishery industry and Department of State. They should be fair to Japan on the one hand and require Japan to be fair to other nations on the other. Unlimited commitment to principles of the "Truman Proclamation" has been suggested. Another

suggestion is that an arrangement be concluded whereby Japan keep its fishermen 100 miles from the American coast and the American nations keep their fishermen a like distance from Japan. In any event, there should be no peace treaty without a permanent protection against Japan returning to her former unrestricted methods of fishing off the shores of other nations.

In this same connection Japan should be compelled to become a party of the international whaling convention and to some form of fur seal treaty. It was interesting to note that the officials of the large whaling companies expressed complete willingness to have Japan become a party to the convention. It should also be noted in this connection that these companies wished to reacquire the same proportion of the Antarctic whaling production that they had enjoyed at the top level of their unrestricted whaling which was a disproportionate share of the world catch.

Fisheries Division of the Natural Resources Section

Work of the mission falls within the scope of the Natural Resources Section of SCAP and more particularly the Fisheries Division. Such limited contact as the mission has enjoyed with the Chief of the Section, Lt. Col. Hubert G. Schenck, created the impression that the Section is exceptionally well conducted. This is especially true of the Fisheries Division under its Chief, Mr. William C. Herrington with whom and with whose staff the mission has been in almost continuous association. Every opportunity has been afforded the mission to see whatever it wished to see and to interview whomever it wished to interview. The facilities of the Division have been freely open for the securing of desired data.

Certain policies deserve special consideration. The mission is thoroughly convinced of the soundness of the position that the Japanese should not be permitted to expand their deep sea fishing operations, under any circumstances, until the Japanese Government demonstrates its ability to control its fishermen and to respect international obligations. It is felt to be of utmost importance to the entire world fishery future that the sound position which SCAP has taken in this matter be maintained.

The mission regrets that the Fisheries Division is not in better position in the matter of personnel to give greater guidance and assistance to the few fishery officials, scientists and industrialists who recognize the fundamental weaknesses of Japanese research. It is believed that the slight increase in expense would be many times repaid. If the large appropriations, facilities and staffs which the Japanese assign to fisheries research were properly directed, outstanding results in fishery conservation might be expected.

Members of the Allied Powers have expressed differences of opinion as to permitting the Japanese to renew whaling operations. The mission believes that SCAP was justified in permitting the Japanese to reenter this field but only in strict observance of the terms of the international whaling conventions and to an extent not in excess of their reasonable share. The notable improvement in the

efficiency of the recent operations is a credit to SCAP and to the Japanese operators and is indicative of what can be done by the Japanese under sound leadership.

Proper functioning of the Fisheries Division is of far greater world importance than is appreciated in the United States. The mission feels very strongly that the United States Department of State and the Fish and Wildlife Service should not only maintain the closest possible contact with SCAP but should keep the United States public and particularly the fishing industry better informed. The mission hopes that the fishing industry of the United States will keep in constant contact with developments in Japan in order to further progressive and enlightened policies. Such policies should aid the recovery of the Japanese fishing industry and promote international understanding. The personnel in the Fisheries Division of SCAP should be maintained at a high level both in technique and character.

The mission desires to congratulate SCAP upon the successful liaison established between its Fisheries Division and the Japanese Government Fisheries Agency. Well deserved mutual confidence has resulted.

The mission desires to comment upon the good work done in the allotment and distribution of supplies, furnished at the expense of the United States, for the benefit of furthering Japanese fishery production. This appears to have been far more beneficial than the direct furnishing of an equivalent amount of food and represents a substantial saving to the American taxpayer. It has also done much to cement friendship between the Japanese fishermen and the American people.

Conclusions

In view of the foregoing review we conclude:

We commend SCAP upon the excellent leadership of the Natural Resources Section and its Fisheries Division. We hope that this quality will be maintained regardless of changes in personnel.

We endorse the policy of SCAP aimed at maximum sustained production.

Supervision over the distribution of gear and oil should be continued as long as they are furnished by the United States.

We believe the policy of close liaison between SCAP and the Japanese Fisheries Agency should be continued and that SCAP should support the advancement of that Agency to the status of a Ministry. We commend especially the work being done by the Director, Tahei Iiyama and his staff.

The position of SCAP, that Japanese research should be concentrated on conservation, appears to warrant the increase of SCAP personnel in order to render the necessary guidance. Such guidance would be enormously valuable in coordinating the entire Japanese research program.

The firm attitude toward petitions for extension of the MacArthur Line, we believe wise. Constant publicity is necessary to convince the Japanese that until they establish the confidence of other nations they will not be accepted as an equal partner in international fisheries and that violations of fishing regulations will only postpone the relaxation of controls.

A patrol of the fishing areas should be operated by the Japanese Government. SCAP should exercise supervision and necessary surveillance over it.

We strongly oppose the Japanese being permitted to engage in the coastal fisheries of any of the Allied Powers and urge that as long as SCAP has control such fishing be prohibited.

It should be made clear to the Japanese that subsidies on export of fish or "dumping" will not be tolerated.

SCAP should continue to maintain the closest liaison with the U.S. Government and its Agencies concerned primarily with the fisheries. The State Department should express itself on postwar fishery policies. Broader distribution of SCAP's fishery reports should be made.

We endorse SCAP's policy of democratization of Japanese industry including the broadening of the character of such cooperatives as do not deprive the individual of his initiative.

We believe that when a treaty of peace is negotiated with Japan, it is imperative for the maintenance of the future food supply of the world and for peace in the Pacific, that permanent fishery treaties should be concurrently negotiated and not left for subsequent action. In this connection the following should be included:

(1) Protection of world coastal fisheries.

(2) Sound policies for high sea fishing.

(3) The international whaling convention.

(4) A fur-seal treaty.

(5) Respect for international fishery conventions.

In conclusion we desire to express our appreciation for the courtesies which have been so liberally extended, for the facilities placed at our disposal and for the cooperation we have received from SCAP and from the Japanese.